

International Women's Day March 8

Celebrating 90 years of the women's movement

by **Penelope Timleck**

International Women's Day, March 8, marks the global celebration of women's accomplishments. It's the highlight of International Women's week. Around the world millions of women will mark the day through rallies, marches, panel discussions, films and receptions celebrating the achievements of women. In Edmonton a group of women from different backgrounds make up the International Women's Day Committee, and they have organized a march and presentation to be held on March 7.

International Women's Day goes back as far as labour strikes held on March in both 1857 and 1908 in New York City. Women were protesting the overcrowded, dangerous working conditions and the exploitive wages paid to women textile workers. Other protests took place in urban industrial centres, including Montreal.

Other issue arose. Women across North America and Europe demanded women's rights and suffrage. In 1910, two German women suggested that March

8 be designated

International

Women's Day to recognize struggles around the world.

Marguerite Ritchie, 78, the first woman to be appointed as a federal Queen's Council will be the keynote speaker. Most of her 55-year legal career was a crusade for women's rights. Some of the legal victories she played a role in included: rights of women to serve jury duty, women's right to marry without for-

feiting their jobs and helping native women regain their native status after marrying non-native husbands.

In Edmonton this year's celebration will include a march at 11:30 am at Oliver Square East. At about 12:15 at Nellie McClung Girl's School in Oliver School there will be speakers and performances by Asani, a native women's singing group and The Raging Grannies, a group of grandmothers who sing socially significant songs and Ross Sheppard High School's Step Team. The event will be hosted by ITV's Linda Steele.

This year's celebration is a celebration of the effort put into the women's movement over the past 90 years. "I don't think the movement has lost momentum so much as it has changed focus," said one committee member. "What I see is a celebration of how far we have come. Our guest speaker will focus on remembering the struggles of generations of women in the movement."

Celebrations in Calgary

In Calgary there is an International Women's Day Celebration on Sunday March 8 from 2 pm to 4 pm at the Calgary Multicultural Centre, 712 5th Street SE.

There will be theatrical performances, construction of a banner for the Women's Global March Against Poverty, button making and more. For more information call Women Looking Forward: 270-9620. ♦

1998 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



MARCH 1998 Vol. 5 No. 3

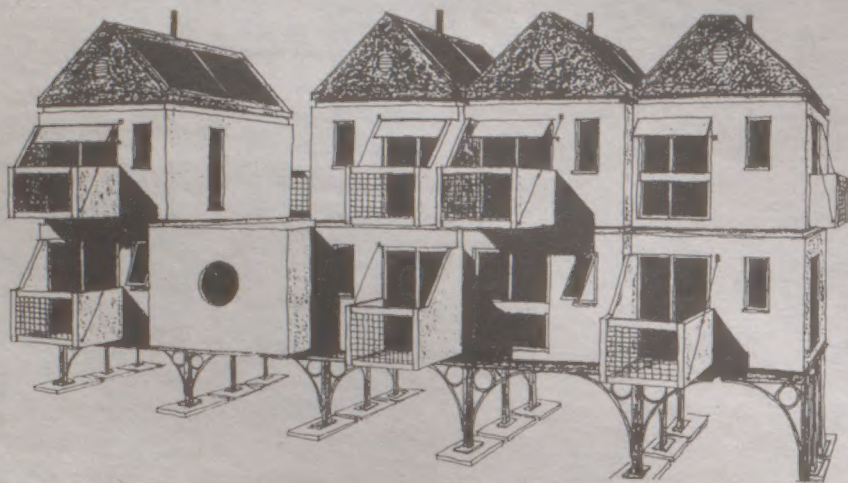
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Our Voice the spare change magazine



RALPH NADER FIGHTING FOR MEDICARE IN ALBERTA

Planner and activist and proposal for affordable housing for homeless in Calgary



"Some people are trying to develop superior cardboard boxes."

- Paul Maas

"You can give us shelter, but we need to make homes for ourselves."

- The Street Speaks

Our Voice

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EMAIL: sparechg@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca

BY SABITRI GHOSH

Paul Maas grew up in England on welfare. At one point in his life, the doctorate-holder went ten months without a job. "I'm not a bleeding heart liberal," says the City of Calgary planner and architect. "But I do expect that people have to take some responsibility for what happens to other people in society. Even from a crass economic view."

Any housing concept that tries to address the needs of Calgary's homeless is a worthy effort. Maas has come up with something that sits pretty "even from a crass economic view."

The math sounds good out loud, courtesy of Fred Robertson. "24 units times \$215 per month, that comes to something like \$5000 a month gross profit. And because the land isn't really bought" - the Maas design brilliantly circumvents the real estate market - "there's very little overhead. It's as sure a bet as can be."

Robertson is the spokesman for Street Speaks, a self-advocacy group of homeless Calgarians. In The Street Speaks, its 1996 homelessness survey, it was " (noted) with little surprise, that the solution to homelessness most mentioned by our participants is accessible, adequate and affordable housing. It also (wished) to suggest that another word be added to the solution, the word, autonomous." Street Speaks is now engineering the proposal to implement Maas' design and seeks a half-a-million-dollars from private investors.

Robertson and Maas met at a City of Calgary workshop on housing issues held in the spring of 1996. The two of them got along famously, and by the end of that year, after receiving a small seed funding grant, Street Speaks began holding workshops in the homeless community to develop the concept in detail.

Many street people, Maas realized, "are looking for basically a room with a bathroom and a place to cook."

Since "the services (street people) rely upon are all downtown, but land is also expensive downtown" logic led him to the downtown's "underutilized spaces. We have an awful lot of land that has been bought by speculators using it for service parking." While waiting to fetch top dollar, these lots often spend years and years without sponsoring any form of development.

So Maas, in a bit of resourceful genius, thought of erecting prefabricated structures above them. Fitted on pilings, the structures would accommodate service parking, be cheap but durable, easily assembled and disassembled, and available to homeless people intent on having a place to themselves. In Maas' scheme, the city would allow the units on its own serviced lots and "forego some

...continued next page

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RALPH NADER FIGHTS FOR MEDICARE IN ALBERTA



Ralph Nader, the American consumer crusader, is coming to Alberta to speak about public health care, and the advantages of the public Canadian system over the private American one.

Ralph Nader is the most renowned and effective American crusader for the rights of consumers and the general public, a role that has repeatedly brought him into conflict with both business and government.

Nader, and his large American organization, Public Citizen, have been strong advocates of a public health system in the U.S. Now he's coming to Alberta to help defend a public system that many feel is being gradually eroded and privatized into becoming more like the American system.

"He's coming here to speak out in favour of what we have in Canada, he also recognizes that it will help in the US if Canada maintains its public health system," says Bill Moore-Kilgannon, executive director of the Parkland Institute that is hosting Nader at a public forum.

"From his American perspective he wrote a book, *Canada First*, where he talked about

some of the reasons why Canada is noted by the UN as being the best country in the world to live in, particularly our health care system is an important example," Moore-Kilgannon said.

"Some 40 million Americans do not have health care insurance, and millions of Americans go without health care because they can't afford it."

"What's happening here in Alberta is the thin edge of the wedge in a broader global push for privatize health care, and a weakening of government control in our social systems."

Nader is speaking in Calgary on April 1 and Edmonton, April 2 in the Parkland's forum: "Public Healthcare - The Canadian Advantage." Maude Barlow, chairperson of the Council of Canadians is speaking in the forum in Edmonton on Friday, April 3.

"We are as in institution to raise the public debate on issues such as health care," says Moore-Kilgannon. "We are not just bringing in people supporting public health care. There will be speaker at the forums who are pushing for a more privatized system." The Parkland Institute is a non-partisan research network based at the University of Alberta.

More than thirty years after

he began his crusade for automobile safety, Ralph Nader continues his efforts to make government and business accountable to the people, and to make all Americans aware of their rights and of their own power to defend them.

His concept of full-time citizenship led him to form groups such as Public Citizen which have exposed corporate and governmental negligence and corruption and won important new protections for Americans as citizens and consumers.

What got Ralph Nader going on his campaigning? He says: "Well, it's a thirst for justice. If you know what's going on and know how society can be improved and happiness advanced, you tend to focus on how to get things done that will help health, safety, opportunity, justice, accountability of powerful institutions to the people they are supposed to serve." ♦



In 1965 Ralph Nader asked a question that shocked America. In his book *Unsafe at Any Speed* he asked why thousands of Americans were being killed or injured in car accidents when the technology already existed to make cars safer.

Ralph Nader

in Calgary
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Info: Parkland Institute 492-8558
www.ualberta.ca/~parkland/home.htm

CONTINUED FROM 2

Possible profit in prefab housing that meets needs

taxes" in the case of private landowners; "units could be built with a five-year lease," and, if need-be, taken down and re-erected elsewhere.

The City itself is noncommittal. Two Council members are in on the project but Robertson, who has a background in hotel management, is waiting for completion of a manual before contacting the rest. The manual will cover the areas of rents and evictions, tenant conduct, community status, and building maintenance. "That's the other essential part of this," says Maas, "a set of rules by which that little community would govern themselves."

Still Maas, who is a social as well as an urban planner, has worries about the larger community's tolerance. "Unfortunately some people don't have too much imagination. People cleave to that which is like them." That's why he wishes more

people could meet the articulate, personable Robertson and why, he explains, he made the modules "look as residential as I could."

Robertson knows all the stereotypes, knows them like an old soldier knows the enemy at hand. He talks about making this a material example of what poor people can do - a PR campaign for the indigent.

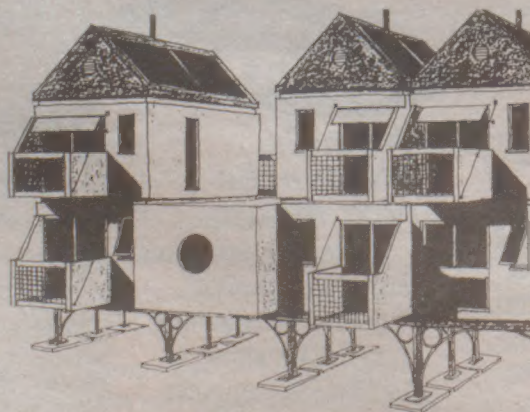
"This can be a tremendous moneymaker," he says, "a tremendous employment generator."

"The project will show that the poor, on their own, are capable of framing innovative solutions and implementing them; that we can demonstrate to ourselves and to society our abilities and accomplishments, thereby reducing the stigma of poverty; and that we are capable of living in harmony with each other."

In the most market-mad city in Canada, where social workers refer to the homeless as their "consumers," Maas feels *Street Speaks*' proposal ought to be seriously heard.

"Calgarians love to talk about initiative and self-reliance," he says.

"Well then, give them the opportunity." ♦





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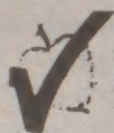


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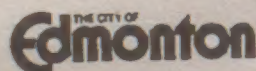
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COMMENT

Working as a temp

No respect and no benefits

BY L. JANET DOWLING

Four years ago I found myself unemployed. Since then I have only been able to secure clerical jobs through temporary employment agencies. I haven't done it for long but during this time I have witnessed enough inhumanity to last a lifetime.

I have worked in government offices where a significant number of positions, which appeared to really be long-term and permanent were being filled by temps. In one office, two people had been working through an agency for three years. These are not temp jobs. They are permanent. Government told the public that they had to cut back on the number of civil servants. They have, but they also found it necessary to rehire many people through temp agencies because they cut too deeply. Temp workers don't have to get benefits or suitable wages. A two-tiered workplace has been created.

There should be laws limiting the amount that temp agencies can take from what they are charging clients. There should also be a limit on the length of time a position can be filled through a temp agency without the employee being hired permanently.

The agencies take a large percentage of what they charge the clients. At one job at a temp agency, where I opened the mail as one of my tasks and saw the invoices, I discovered they took 40%.

Temps have no rights or benefits and are easily replaced by someone even more desperate to earn a few dollars.

Supervisors and co-workers know that temps have no rights. A temp is lower than the lowest permanent person-at the very bottom of the pecking order. If someone does not like something trivial about us, we can be let go at the drop of a hat, with no valid explanation.

We are caught between the agency and the people we are actually working for. The chain of command can get very convoluted. The agency, because they want the client's business, especially in cases where temps are being used to fill the same positions year after year, will ultimately side with

the clients, in spite of what is just or moral.

The worst part is that I never know what is being said about me to the agency. When a person is hired directly they get to see their performance appraisals. If I am being emotionally abused, I want to cover myself, that is tell my side of the story, in case someone is saying something nasty or untrue about me. However, they sometimes are just being obnoxious to my face without making unfair reports to the agency. If this is the case I would rather not report any unpleasantness to the agency.

I have worked at companies where people were working two hours of free overtime a day. If employees would refuse to work such an inordinate amount of free overtime, then the company would be forced to hire ample staff. In today's economy, the employer knows they are breaking the law, but also they know that the workers are generally too scared and too uninformed to take it up with Alberta Labour.

It irks me that working people do not stick together. It seems to be every person for themselves. There are too many self-serving expedient people. There are even some who derive sadistic pleasure from psychologically torturing others who are vulnerable. This is what makes it so easy for companies and organizations to take advantage of people.

If one working person is in a slightly better position than someone else, often they feel superior and they act as if though they are. They demean and mistreat people in positions below them. If we would all stick together maybe we would have fewer social problems.

I long for the day when the economy improves to the point where working people are accorded with a greater measure of respect, as well as financial security. Democracy is meaningless without freedom from poverty. ♦

L. Janet Dowling is an Edmonton "temp" and writer.



Writing CONTEST

**Winners
announced
next month**

There were many submissions to the Our Voice true story writing contest. The winner of the IBM PS1 computer will be announced next month.



SONGS OF THE STREET 3rd Annual Poetry Night

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"You know how it is with women" ...in the job market

"You can make fifty thousand dollars a year, if you stick around long enough and the best part is you'll be in charge of a whole room full of women," this guy tells me at a recent job interview. His name is Byron. He is the office manager for a "marketing" company.

Byron looked to be the same age as me, mid-twenties.

He explained to me that this was the major call center for some mainstream magazines. What they did was try to sell group packages of these magazines over the phone to dental offices, doctors' offices. He said it was a hell of a deal and an extremely easy sell.

I would, even though I was management material, of course, have to start out on the phones. I'd need to get a feel for the nature of the business and to understand what the women who would some day work under me went through on a day-to-day basis.

"The reason your management material here, is because you're a man. We don't hire women as managers. They stay on the phones. They can't advance in this company," he told me.

"Well you know how it is with women," he said. "Their personal problems always get in the way of their work. I don't have time to deal with it, so we don't hire women as managers."

"Men have personal problems too. I don't undersand your thinking." I said to him squarely.

He smiled. "Well, maybe we like to keep the girls on the phone because that's what they're good at. Talking on the phone," he responded. Then he waited for me to laugh, but I didn't.

When I had first entered the office, the place had telemarketing written all over it. There were no computers or filing cabinets, only desks and phones. I was evidently the last one to get there. There were already ten or so women waiting ahead of me to be interviewed. I was called in first though.

I'd phoned and specifically asked the guy who I'd spoken to, Byron, if the job was telemarketing. He had told me it wasn't. He told me they were in charge of distribution for numerous magazines and they were an order office. There were no sales involved. I confronted him again.

"I didn't say that," he said. He didn't even try to look convincing.

So I picked up my resume from his desk and stood up. I stared down at him hoping my stone-cold glare would tell him what I thought of him, then I left.

I heard him call the next name on his list. I turned and saw a very attractive young lady walk into his office. I hope she did the same thing I did. Walked out.

A bit of warning to those desperate for a job. If you find something in the paper, and if they won't tell you anything over the phone, don't bother with it, because it isn't real. Just because you need money doesn't give anyone the right to take advantage of you and lie to you. ♦

Michael Walters

Editorial OPINION

Our Voice the spare change magazine

Slam-dunked a \$20 in freezing January

It was around the middle of January, a freezing 32 below. I was standing on the corner of 101 Street and Jasper Avenue in Edmonton. Selling Our Voice was now becoming a test of psychological resilience. I'd been standing there for a little more than half an hour, hoping for one sale, but passers by were much too occupied with running on their way, heading for warm places away from this downtown Siberia.

The white, worn-down sock, substituting for a mitt on my left hand couldn't keep out the frosty, biting wind that was venomously chewing at my fingers. I prayed in my heart that God would send me an angel with a generous donation to rescue me from the cold. Then I noticed a white-collared priest. He was a middle-aged man, conservatively attired in an expensive trench coat. He was wearing glasses and really close-cropped hair, neatly combed to the side. As he walked toward me he reached into his pocket and reached out and quickly "slam dunked" a folded green bill into an upper pocket of my parka. The money was partially exposed, a \$20 bill folded in half. As I pulled it out and realized what it was I excitedly called out "Thanks sir, God Bless you." The humble priest, with a minimal smile, walked away briskly without looking back.

The thought of this generous donation overwhelmed me and I dwelled on the significance of this moment in Our Voice vending history. I ran off to a nearby coffee shop to celebrate the occasion. Even if it felt like Hell was freezing over on the outside, on the inside, it felt like it was Christmas all over again.

I went out again 15 minutes later, and waited another half hour before selling my next copy. But time was no longer of the essence. The thought of having \$20 in my possession eased my mind. My prayer had been answered and my persistent stubbornness standing out in the cold was rewarded again. ♦

John Zapantis



TELL US WHAT YOU THINK. TALKING BACK!
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Observing one of your distributors standing at a street corner in Calgary yesterday - no one buying his papers it seemed - I went over and gave him a good profit margin for one.

I brought it home to read and I must tell you I am very surprised at the defeatist and depressing tone of the paper. You project so much negativity and appear to whine. Little in the articles it would seem endeavors to cheer up and encourage those who are unfortunately caught in the cycle of poverty.

No matter where we are in today's society, we all have to strive and keep on striving no matter what we face, even working 12 hours a day/night.

There are many good people who volunteer in different ways to provide help for those who fall through the cracks. You wrote a little on this.

Surely you can write about some of the successes of where people have climbed back out of their bad situations and so give the people involved in Our Voice encouragement and hope.

For one thing I am tired of the whining about residential schools and all the claims of abuse. I spent seven years away in residential schools and was slapped with a 'leather' when I was caught speaking the wrong language. I had to put up with food which I disliked immensely (mass-produced and some awful

smells!) If I did not know my school-work I was slapped with a ruler or the teacher's hand across the back of my knees. I am not a 'native' Canadian. I am a white 'European'. I look to the fact that I got a good strong education which toughened me up for the real world which is not Paradise - in fact it is a 'Garden of Tears'.

I wish you the love and courage of Jesus so you can go on helping those who need it through your pages.

God Bless your work,

T. Heron.
Calgary

Changing Together, a Centre for Immigrant Women Finding a voice Feeling comfortable in a

by Linda Dumont

"At the Centre, women can come together and speak freely. There are many cultures where a woman cannot speak freely. Usually she has her wishes told by some male authority, her husband, her father, her elder brother. When she comes to Canada it is a different situation. The centre helps her to find a voice."

So says Mala Sharma, the program co-ordinator for Changing Together, a Centre for Immigrant Women. The Centre helps immigrant women change and learn to participate in Canadian society. Founded in 1984, it is a non-profit organization operated by immigrant women for immigrant women.

Sharma immigrated to Canada from Guyana with her family when she was eight years old. Because her father left Guyana for political reasons, she has never been back.

The centre was started by a group of immigrant women who felt that there was no place in Edmonton where they could come together and share thoughts, ideas and feelings with one another. It is a settlement agency, helping women to get settled into their new country.

"We take the woman from the time she is comfortable in her neighborhood but not yet ready to work," said Sharma. "There are other settlement agencies to help the woman when she first arrives to get comfortable with her neighborhood, to learn things like how to shop, to take buses, and visit the doctor."

Over 2,500 women use the services of Changing Together every year.

"We get women from all continents, and all ages from the early 20's to the mid 70's," Sharma said. "All are trying to figure out what Canada is about."

Some of the women come for social reasons, some want to get as much information as they can, while others want to work.



Dorota Martyniak, Minda Andayu and Helen Zhao of Changing Together
PHOTO: LINDA DUMONT

Dorota Martyniak, a volunteer with Changing Together, immigrated from Poland in 1991. She met her Polish-Canadian husband in Canada in 1988, then returned to marry him.

When Martyniak arrived, she spoke no English although she graduated from the University of Poland with a degree in Administration Law.

"The first year was terrible," she said. "I have a university degree, yet I started like from zero. I just stayed home. It was very depressing. I wanted to go back. Now, every year I'm feeling more comfortable."

Martyniak took ESL, then went on to take English at Grant MacEwan and upgrading at AVC.

"In Canada I realize I would be more useful as a social worker than in law," she said. She plans on going to university.

Helen Zhao came from Beijing, China in 1994 when her husband came to Canada to study genetics research in forestry. She has a law degree from Beijing University and was a teacher of law in China.

"I knew some English, but I couldn't speak," she said, "I was on the airplane and I was thirsty, so I just said water. After I came I learned English at AVC. I feel I can speak a little bit."

Women

Tribute to Women

a new country



Zhao also took some classes at Changing Together. Now she is taking night classes in accounting at NAIT.

"Sometimes we consider we should go back to China because the job is not secure for us," she said, "I feel I have no hope to catch a job. In China we had security. We don't need to worry about the job, or the house. Everyone was the same so you don't feel that you're bad. Here, I feel that I'm living in the air."

Minda Andaya came from the Philippines in 1988, and got a job at Changing Together shortly after her arrival.

In the Philippines, Andaya worked at an insurance company. For her, the language barrier was not as great because she had learned English in school, although the accent was very different.

"I was shocked by the weather," Andaya said, "The ice everywhere. I had gone to movies and seen snow, but I was shocked."

Andaya became a Canadian citizen in 1992.

An immigrant woman can apply for Canadian citizenship after she has been here for three years. The process takes about ten months and there is a fee of \$200 for an adult and \$100 for a child. She has to pass both an interview and a written test about Canada.

Mala Sharma, program director of Changing Together
PHOTO: LINDA DUMONT



Changing Together helps in the following areas:

- ESL classes
- Family services
- Workshops on topics of interest to immigrant women
- volunteer programs
- mentors for immigrant women seeking employment
- Personal development
- discussion groups
- information and referral services

There is a daycare for women taking the programs, and a drop-in for women. The Centre is open Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ♦

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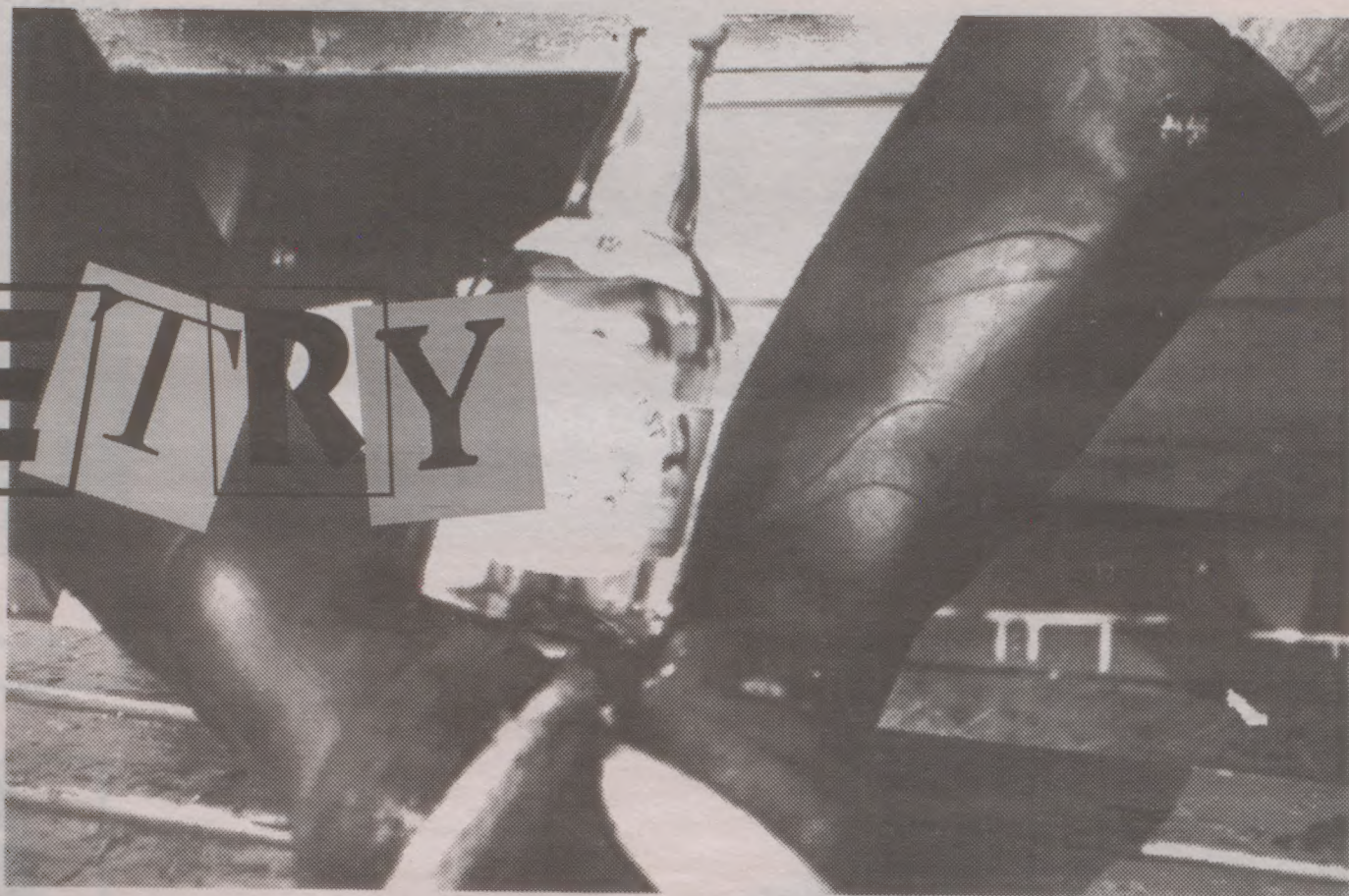
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POETRY



Adolescent Humanity

Born to rebel against the order
in which we dwell.
Revolution after revolution
Hell piled on hell.

We find the meaning of time
in spirit of song and rhyme.
All the stories told
into the wind when we're bold.

Never to turn, simply to relive
memories are what we give
but eventually they burn.

Do we begin to learn
the rebellion within.
The only struggle turns out to be
giving to ourselves.

Learning to love each other
begins at home
for in growth with time
aren't we all brother, sister,
father and mother.

Lance Sanders

Lone Wolf

I go for walks in the forest,
every other day

I see a lone wolf walking,
not too far along the way

We both stop to look at each other

I want to go over and touch him,
but I tell myself not to bother.

He's the most handsome creature
I've ever seen.

So unique, so mysterious, and
I think "Where have I been?"

Not to have noticed such a fine creature.

So huge, with pink eyes, and a pelt,
so white and pure.

I wondered why he's alone,
I know now.

I see the reason why,
he's an albino.

Dolly Yellowbird

PRIDE, SPIRIT and ACHIEVEMENT

The Paralympic Sports Association (PSA) is a non-profit organizations which has been providing a variety of athletic and recreation programs for persons with a physical disability in the City of Edmonton for the past 33 years.



PSA has embarked on its annual telephone fundraising campaign in the Edmonton region. When our canvasser calls, please remember that your donation will be used locally to provide opportunities to disabled children and adults in your community.

Give Generously – from the Heart!

For more information on the Paralympic Sports Association,
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Our Voice accepts poetry submissions but unfortunately not all poetry may be published. Please send only a copy of your poetry, as submissions are not returned. Poetry editor is Michael Walters.

Heard it yet?

NEWS OF THE WORLD

Kiwi attacker jams up 43

Like everything, kiwi fruit has its good and bad points. The former emerged in a recent survey showing that kiwis are the most nutritious of all fruits. In Israel, on the other hand, grocer Chaim Ezerman has been experiencing the fruit's down side. Trouble started when Mr Ezerman, 42, of Haifa, sold customer Sara Bar-Shem a rotten kiwi. "it was accidental," he explained. "if she'd complained I'd have happily exchanged it. But instead she started doing terrible things." The "terrible things" began with Mrs Bar-Shem daubing "Kiwi Shagger!" all over Mr Ezerman's shop. Thereafter not a day went by when the vexed fruit vendor wasn't subjected to some form of embarrassment, be it having kiwis thrown through his window, or dog turd smeared kiwis pushed through his mail slot. Things came to a head when his car exploded after having 43 kiwi fruits jammed up its exhaust, whereupon his tormentor was finally arrested. "Thank God it wasn't a rotten watermelon," sighed Mr Ezerman, "or she might have done some real damage."

Hostage for 43 days, uncle forgives marriage

People have been getting kidnapped for the most bizarre reasons. In Yemen, a British man has been abducted by people who are demanding jobs in return for his life. Still more unlikely were the experiences of Kenyan Maurice Enagwe, who was kidnapped as part of a marriage-proposal scheme. Mr Enagwe was seized at gunpoint while returning from work in Mombasa. Initially he thought his abductor, Daniel Amako, wanted money. It soon transpired, however that what was really on Mr Amako's mind was romance. "He wanted to marry my niece," explained Mr Enagwe, "but she'd turned him down, so he decided to hold me hostage until she changed her mind." For the next five weeks Mr Enagwe was duly kept chained to a radiator while Mr Amako negotiated for his release. Initially the girl refused to alter her position, but eventually came round when Mr Amako threatened to cut off his victim's ears, whereupon Mr Enagwe was released and the pair married. Amazingly, Mr Enagwe has declined to press charges. "It's my wedding present," he beamed. "They seem such a happy couple."

Saved from a life of wealth and ease

It's been an extraordinary generosity by thieves. In Germany, a mugger stole \$96 from a British tourist, and then returned \$28 of it, saying he had enough. Equally beneficent was American bankrobber Reuben Salt, who spent four months stealing \$400,000 from a bank in Wyoming, and then another four months giving it back again. Mr Salt's Odyssey of munificence began when, after four months tunnelling he, he finally broke into the vault of his local bank, removing \$400,000 before making his escape. A text-book robbery took an unexpected turn, however, when, a month after the successful heist, and before he had had a chance to spend any of the money, Mr Salt underwent a conversion to a particularly strident branch of evangelical Christianity. Stolen money being incompatible with his new faith, he therefore decided to return his ill-gotten gains. He duly burrowed his way back into the vault and re-deposited the cash, during which act he was discovered by the bank's security guards and arrested. He was given a suspended prison sentence, and ordered to pay costs. "God saved me from a life of wealth and ease," cried a jubilant Mr Salt.

Vigilant apple tree traps crook

Around the world, apples have been making news. In England, a Kentish farmer has grown the world's biggest apple, weighing in at almost 4 pounds. In France, meanwhile, a thief was brought to book by a public-spirited apple tree. Habitual offender Mark Besseau, 32, of Perigueux, was at the time being chased by police after robbing a local bar. With the forces of law and order closing in, a desperate Mr Besseau had ducked in to a nearby orchard and shinnied up an apple tree, hiding among its upper branches. As he'd intended, his pursuers had rushed past beneath the tree without noticing their quarry lurking in the foliage above. His delight at having outwitted the police was short-lived, however, for when he tried to descend he discovered his left foot was trapped in the crook between two branches. No amount of twisting could release him, and he was discovered two days later by the orchard's owner, unconscious and suffering from hypothermia. "As I've always said," chuckled one police officer, "it takes a crook to catch a crook." ♦

Articles compiled by Paul Sussman in **The Big Issue**, London, England's street-sold magazine.

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Words on the Street

JOHN'S STYLE FILE

Bunni Goode

John Zapantis Our Voice vendor, writer and photographer meets the most interesting people.



Native art has become a way of life for prominent inner-city artist Bunni Goode. This native artist has established a name for herself and has achieved excellence and recognition as her art has been publicly displayed at an array of social agencies in Edmonton.

Her work is prominent at the Boyle MacCauley Health Centre's spiritual circle room, at the Boyle Street Co-op, and at the Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre.

"I've done art all my life," says Bunni. "It's very therapeutic for me. It's a release of energy. If I was very angry one day, I'd put it into my art work and as long as I put it into something very productive and very creative, I find that my art work comes alive." Goode said she has had her days dealing with anger, and has utilized that energy in her art. She

says her life experiences have helped created some of her most exciting work.

Bunni Goode is celebrating 11 years of sobriety. Her sobriety, she says, has brought her closer to the Creator, as well as to her community. She is a participant at the native spirituality circle that is offered at the Boyle MacCauley Health Centre every Tuesday from 7-9 pm.

As a native, born and raised in the city, racism is one thing Bunni feels she has faced and conquered. "I think the racism I grew up with just made me stronger and I had to work harder than others to excel." Bunni's culture is important to her, and now she wants to give back to the community. Recently she was hired by the Health Centre as a women's spiritual advisor. Fridays she'll be available to meet with and advise women at the Centre. ♦

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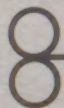
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BY HEATHER
SLADE

The mother of six children, four of whom are now grown, Dolly Yellowbird has high hopes for her future.

This soft spoken lady may look unassuming as she sells Our Voice in the downtown core, however she sees the magazine as a stepping stone to a new life for her and her two youngest children.

As well as selling Our Voice, Dolly has also completed her Building Services Managers course and now wishes to upgrade her academic standing. Eventually she would like to take Business Management at N.A.I.T.

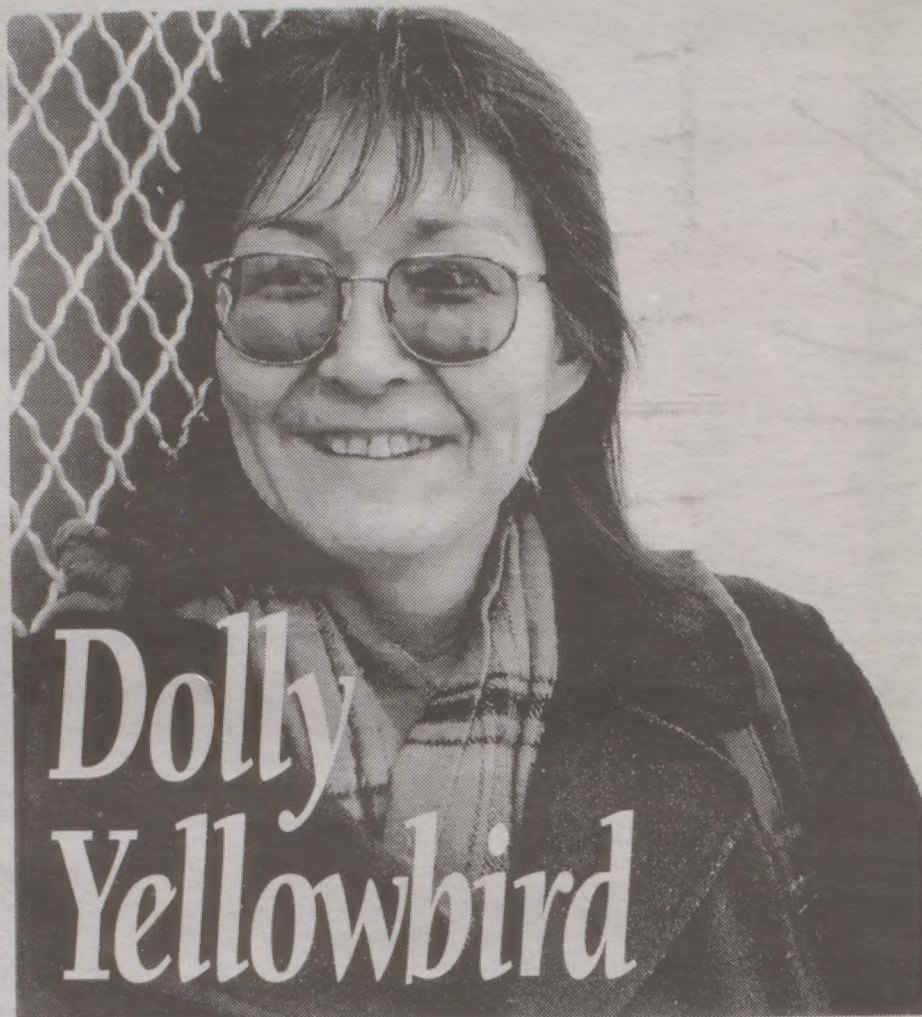
Two of the most important people in Dolly's life, aside from her children are her business partners and best friends Popeye and Teddy. The three of them look out for each other and take turns vending the paper. While vending together in what can be a hectic and judgemental part of downtown they ease the others' burdens with laughter and spirits.

Dolly writes poetry as well. Her work provides strong native and spiritual images and themes. Although she had only completed grade seven, her work is amazingly clear and lyrical.

"Poetry is very important to me," says Dolly. "It has always given me relief from some of life's harder moments."

Dolly has had no shortage of harder moments in her life. She came to Edmonton when she was fourteen, looking for support and friendships she was unable to find on her troubled reserve in Hobeema.

However after a failed marriage and being left alone to raise her young children, she decided it was for the best to return to the reserve. Unfortunately not a lot had changed. Substance



Dolly Yellowbird

abuse along with its devastating effects were rampant, but feeling that she had no where to turn, she stayed for seven years.

Finally in 1995, Dolly decided to take another chance on city life. With two of her children in foster care after her ex-husband had taken them from her and then abandoned them, she sought to stabilize her life in order to get her children back.

She found herself a house and went on income assistance until she was cut off without warning. So again she found herself with no money and no home and of course no children.

At this point Dolly sought the help of the Bissell Centre, where she began coming for coffee and a warm place to hang out. Eventually she began attending the biweekly women's lunch program. It was at the Bissell where Dolly first heard about Our Voice and the opportunity it gave her to make some much needed money.

"I've enjoyed selling the paper. It's allowed me to become a lot more comfortable when I deal with people," says Dolly.

For now Dolly is working as often as she can. As well she picks up work as a babysitter or a housekeeper. Her intent is to save enough money to get a place of her own again. Her ultimate goal is get her children back into her care. Despite many setbacks, Dolly is working hard to achieve her goals and hold on to her dreams. ♦

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Tribute to Women

PHOTOS BY PIETER DE VOS JR



For this Tribute to Women issue, Pieter de Vos Jr assembled this collage of portraits from our community.

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